(d) Steps being taken to check felling of forest wood are as under:—

(i) Seizure, confiscation of vehicles and articles involved in illicit felling, arresting and prosecution of offenders by the State Governments in accordance with the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and State Forest Acts.

(ii) Regular patrolling by field staff.

(iii) Inspection of forest produce in transit and checking of saw mills.

(iv) Strengthening of wireless networking.

(v) Acquiring and use of fire arms by field staff in vulnerable areas.

(vi) Protection, conservation and management of forests by the active involvement of local communities through the process of Joint Forest Management.

(vii) Deployment of Home guards and State Police personnel in special situations.

(viii) Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments under various centrally sponsored forestry and wildlife schemes for the protection and conservation of forests and wildlife.

(ix) Creation of network of protected areas i.e. Wildlife National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves.

Manual on e-waste

538. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are preparing a manual on assessing e-waste in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the project;

(c) whether it is a fact that the biggest source of e-waste in India is through imports; and

(d) if so, the action Government are taking in co-ordination with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and other Ministries concerned, to stop importing obsolete computers and other electronic gadgets which form major e-waste in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has initiated stops to prepare a Manual on assessing e-waste in the country, for which the work has been awarded to a consultant.

(c) and (d) Electronic waste is included under List-A and List-B of Schedule-3 of the Hazardous Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2000 and 2003. E-waste is also regulated by the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-Boundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal. No country can export e-waste without written consent from the importing country. The import of this waste, therefore, requires specific permission of the Ministry of Environment & Forests. No such permission has been given to any authority or person by the Ministry till date for import of e-waste.

As per the Foreign Trade Policy 2004-2009, import of second hand computers is under the restricted category and their import requires an import licence. Such second hand computers are allowed to be imported for use in educational institutions, NGOs and charitable organisations of the country. Import licences are granted with the approval of an Inter-Ministerial Committee of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). As per the available information, the quantity of second hand computers, etc., permitted for import so far being small, the same does not form major constituent of e-waste in the country.

Damage to fragile environment

539. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study was conducted by Government on the likely damages to fragile environment of Palk Straight and Gulf of Mannar and endangering the lives of Marine animals and Plants of the area as a result of Sethusamudram Project;